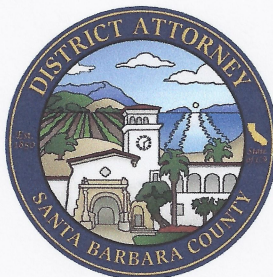


OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA
JOYCE E. DUDLEY
District Attorney



DA 03-144

RELEASE NUMBER

March 1, 2013

RELEASE DATE

APPROVED BY *Joyce E. Dudley*, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Sanford Horowitz, Deputy District Attorney

CONTACT PERSON (805) 568-2300

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

March 1, 2013

Re: People v. Lau Van Huynh

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that yesterday 78-year old Lau Van Huynh pled to Felony Hit and Run Driving, in violation of Vehicle Code section 20001(a). As a result of this plea, Huynh will serve up to one year in Santa Barbara County Jail as well as being placed on felony probation for three years. If Huynh violates his probation at any point during those three years, he will then face four years in prison. Huynh's sentencing hearing will be held on April 4, 2013.

This plea was based upon Huynh's criminal actions on January 15, 2013, at approximately 1:00 a.m. while driving southbound on the US-101 freeway. At that time his vehicle collided into pedestrian Simon Chavez, who was stumbling and staggering in the #2 lane of the US-101 southbound. Mr. Chavez died at the scene as a result of being hit by Huynh. After hitting Mr. Chavez, Huynh did not stop to render aid or call 911; instead, Huynh fled the scene by driving southbound out of Santa Barbara County.

The District Attorney's Office commends the investigators of the California Highway Patrol and the Chumash Casino for their outstanding work on this investigation, which included identifying and locating the suspect vehicle, apprehending Huynh, as well as performing a thorough crime scene investigation.

In response to this plea District Attorney Dudley stated: "Mr. Chavez's family, friends, and community are devastated by this tragedy as they all deeply miss their gifted young victim."

Dudley went on to say, "Hit and runs causing injury or death are on the rise. We all must be vigilant and make sure all drivers can, and do, remain focused on driving, because as we have seen too many times, cars can become deadly weapons. Further every driver has the legal obligation to call 911 if they believe they have hit anyone or damaged any property. "

□ SANTA BARBARA OFFICE
1112 Santa Barbara Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2300
Fax: (805) 568-2453

□ SANTA MARIA OFFICE
312-D East Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454
(805) 346-7540
Fax: (805) 346-7588

□ LOMPOC OFFICE
115 Civic Center Plaza
Lompoc, CA 93436
(805) 737-7760
Fax: (805) 737-7732